

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) A process of producing cooked noodles, including the step of heating cooked noodles by direct contact with superheated steam at 120 to 480 kPa.

2. (original) The process of producing cooked noodles according to claim 1, wherein the cooked noodles are cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution.

3. (original) A process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution, including the step of heating cooked noodles, the step of heating comprising the substeps of:

directly applying superheated steam to cooked noodles intermittently and

steaming the noodles by direct contact with saturated steam.

4. (currently amended) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 2 [[or 3]], comprising the steps of:

packing cooked noodles in a container having an opening,

heating the container and contents in the chamber of a heat/pressure sterilizer ~~according to claim 2 or 3~~, wherein the superheated steam having a vapor pressure of 140 kPa or more is used,

slowly decreasing the inner pressure of the chamber to 120 to 130 kPa,

further decreasing the inner pressure of the chamber to atmospheric pressure, and

aseptically sealing the opening of the container.

5. (currently amended) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 2 [[or 3]], further including the steps of:

packing cooked noodles in a container having an opening and

pouring a fat and oil in the container before the step of heating.

6. (currently amended) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 2 [[or 3]], wherein the cooked noodles are acid-treated, low-pH noodles which contain 0.05 to 2.5% by weight of at least one of sugar and non-sugar sweeteners and 0.02 to 0.85% by weight of sodium chloride.

7. (currently amended) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 2 [[or 3]], wherein the cooked noodles are acid-treated, low-pH noodles which have been treated with a solution containing

at least one of sugar and non-sugar sweeteners and a solution containing a sodium chloride.

8. (new) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 3, comprising the steps of:

packing cooked noodles in a container having an opening,

heating the container and contents in the chamber of a heat/pressure sterilizer, wherein the superheated steam having a vapor pressure of 140 kPa or more is used,

slowly decreasing the inner pressure of the chamber to 120 to 130 kPa,

further decreasing the inner pressure of the chamber to atmospheric pressure, and

aseptically sealing the opening of the container.

9. (new) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 3, further including the steps of:

packing cooked noodles in a container having an opening and

pouring a fat and oil in the container before the step of heating.

10. (new) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 3, wherein the cooked noodles are acid-treated, low-pH noodles which contain 0.05 to 2.5% by weight of at least one of sugar and non-sugar sweeteners and 0.02 to 0.85% by weight of sodium chloride.

11. (new) The process of producing cooked noodles packaged for ambient temperature distribution according to claim 3, wherein the cooked noodles are acid-treated, low-pH noodles which have been treated with a solution containing at least one

of sugar and non-sugar sweeteners and a solution containing a sodium chloride.